Notice of Allowability	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	09/932,119	WEBSTER ET AL.	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	Sanjiv D. Shah	2176	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address--

All claims being allowable, PROSECUTION ON THE MERITS IS (OR REMAINS) CLOSED in this application. If not included herewith (or previously mailed), a Notice of Allowance (PTOL-85) or other appropriate communication will be mailed in due course. **THIS NOTICE OF ALLOWABILITY IS NOT A GRANT OF PATENT RIGHTS.** This application is subject to withdrawal from issue at the initiative of the Office or upon petition by the applicant. See 37 CFR 1.313 and MPEP 1308.

1. ☒ This communication is responsive to *interview authorizing amendment on 4/15/05*.

2. ☒ The allowed claim(s) is/are *1-12,14,16 and 17*.

3. ☒ The drawings filed on *29 November 2004* are accepted by the Examiner.

4. ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
   a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some* c) ☐ None of the:
      1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
      2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____ .
      3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this national stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

   * Certified copies not received: _____.

Applicant has THREE MONTHS FROM THE "MAILING DATE" of this communication to file a reply complying with the requirements noted below. Failure to timely comply will result in ABANDONMENT of this application.
THIS THREE-MONTH PERIOD IS NOT EXTENDABLE.

5. ☐ A SUBSTITUTE OATH OR DECLARATION must be submitted. Note the attached EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT or NOTICE OF INFORMAL PATENT APPLICATION (PTO-152) which gives reason(s) why the oath or declaration is deficient.

6. ☐ CORRECTED DRAWINGS (as "replacement sheets") must be submitted.
   (a) ☐ including changes required by the Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) attached
      1) ☐ hereto or 2) ☐ to Paper No./Mail Date _____.
   (b) ☐ including changes required by the attached Examiner's Amendment / Comment or in the Office action of Paper No./Mail Date _____.

   Identifying indicia such as the application number (see 37 CFR 1.84(c)) should be written on the drawings in the front (not the back) of each sheet. Replacement sheet(s) should be labeled as such in the header according to 37 CFR 1.121(d).

7. ☐ DEPOSIT OF and/or INFORMATION about the deposit of BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL must be submitted. Note the attached Examiner's comment regarding REQUIREMENT FOR THE DEPOSIT OF BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL.

Attachment(s)

1. ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2. ☐ Notice of Draftperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3. ☒ Information Disclosure Statements (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08), Paper No./Mail Date 1/18/2005
4. ☐ Examiner's Comment Regarding Requirement for Deposit of Biological Material
5. ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
6. ☒ Interview Summary (PTO-413), Paper No./Mail Date *4/16/05* .
7. ☒ Examiner's Amendment/Comment
8. ☐ Examiner's Statement of Reasons for Allowance
9. ☐ Other _____.

EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT

1. An examiner's amendment to the record appears below. Should the changes and/or additions be unacceptable to applicant, an amendment may be filed as provided by 37 CFR 1.312. To ensure consideration of such an amendment, it MUST be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee.

Authorization for this examiner's amendment was given in a telephone interview with Russ Weinzimmer on 4/15/2005.

The application has been amended as follows:

Claim 1 (currently amended): A method for creating a user interface for a spreadsheet-based software application, the method comprising:

providing a spreadsheet having:

a standard cell region including a plurality of standard cells displayable and accessible as standard spreadsheet cells, and

a user interface cell region, distinct from the standard cell region in that display characteristics of the user interface cell region are independent of display characteristics of the standard cell region, the user interface cell region including a plurality of effectively hidden user interface cells that are not displayable and accessible like standard cells, instead being reserved for display and access only by a dialog control function, each user interface cell being displayable only within a window superimposed upon the standard spreadsheet cells; and

providing at least one dialog control function adapted to provide access to, and cursor movement within, an assigned ~~a~~ subset of the plurality of user interface cells, and adapted to create the window superimposed upon the standard spreadsheet cells.

Claim 2 (previously presented): The method of claim 1, wherein the at least one dialog control function is executed as a function in a standard spreadsheet cell.

Claim 3 (original): The method of claim 1, wherein the user interface cells are executed by the same processor that executes the standard cells.

Claim 4 (original): The method of claim 1, wherein the window superimposed upon the standard spreadsheet cells is opaque with respect to the standard spreadsheet cells, such that the standard spreadsheet cells cannot be seen where ever the standard spreadsheet cells are covered by the window.

Claim 5 (previously presented): The method of claim 1, wherein the window superimposed upon the standard spreadsheet cells completely covers the standard spreadsheet cells so as to hide substantially all previously visible features of the standard spreadsheet cells.

Claim 6 (previously presented): The method of claim 1, further comprising:

providing at least one wizard function adapted to manage a plurality of dialog control functions.

Claim 7 (previously presented): The method of claim 6, wherein the at least one wizard function presents the plurality of dialog control functions as a menu wherein each dialog control function can be independently accessed by a user.

Claim 8 (previously presented): The method of claim 6, wherein the wizard executes the plurality of dialog control functions in a sequence.

Claim 9 (previously presented): The method of claim 8, wherein the sequence and functionality of the plurality of dialog control functions are responsive to user input.

Claim 10 (currently amended): A method for creating a user interface for a software application, the method comprising:

providing a spreadsheet having a user interface cell region that is distinct from a standard cell region in that display characteristics of the user interface cell region are independent of display characteristics of the standard cell region, the user interface cell region including a plurality of effectively hidden user interface cells that are not displayable and accessible like standard cells, instead being reserved for display and access only by a dialog

control function, each user interface cell being displayable only within a window superimposed upon the software application; and

providing at least one dialog control function adapted to provide access to, and cursor movement within, an assigned ~~a~~ subset of the plurality of user interface cells, and adapted to create the window superimposed upon the software application.

Claim 11 (currently amended): A user interface for a spreadsheet-based software application, the application including a spreadsheet having a standard cell region having a plurality of standard cells displayable and accessible as standard spreadsheet cells, the user interface comprising:

a user interface cell region, distinct from the standard cell region in that display characteristics of the user interface cell region are independent of display characteristics of the standard cell region, the user interface cell region having a plurality of effectively hidden user interface cells that are not displayable and accessible like standard cells, instead being reserved for display and access only by a dialog control function, each user interface cell being displayable only as a window superimposed upon the standard spreadsheet cells; and

at least one dialog control function adapted to provide access to, and cursor movement within, an assigned ~~a~~ subset of the plurality of user interface

cells, and adapted to create the window superimposed upon the standard spreadsheet cells.

Claim 12 (currently amended): A spreadsheet comprising:

a standard cell region having a plurality of standard cells displayable and accessible as standard spreadsheet cells;(, and)

a user interface cell region, distinct from the standard cell region in that display characteristics of the user interface cell region are independent of display characteristics of the standard cell region, the user interface cell region having a plurality of effectively hidden user interface cells that are not displayable and accessible like standard cells, instead being reserved for display and access only by a dialog control function, each user interface cell being displayable only as within a window superimposed upon the standard spreadsheet cells; and

at least one dialog control function adapted to create the window superimposed upon the standard spreadsheet cells.

Claim 13 (canceled)

Claim 14 (currently amended): A computer system comprising:

a spreadsheet having a standard cell region including a plurality of standard cells displayable and accessible as standard cells, and a user

interface cell region, distinct from the standard cell region in that display characteristics of the user interface cell region are independent of display characteristics of the standard cell region, the user interface cell region including a plurality of effectively hidden user interface cells that are not displayable and accessible like standard cells, instead being reserved for display and access only by a ~~(dialog)~~ control function;

an application processor for processing both the plurality of standard cells, and the plurality of user interface cells; ~~(and)~~

a user interface processor, cooperative with the application processor, for displaying the plurality of standard cells and user interface cells; and

at least one control function adapted to create at least a portion of a user interface for the spreadsheet, the control function being executable by the application processor.

Claim 15 (canceled)

Claim 16 (currently amended): The computer system of claim ~~(15)~~ 14, wherein the at least one control function is a dialog function.

Claim 17 (currently amended): The computer system of claim ~~(15)~~ 14, wherein the at least one control function is a custom view function.

Claims 18-31 (canceled)

2. The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance: The cited prior art fails to teach the claimed invention alone or in a combination. Specifically in view of Examiner's amendment, the claimed invention is clearly distinguishable over the cited prior art. Specifically, Seyler, at col. 6, lines 14-18, states that "In many cases, as here, the object area exceeds the cell size. If a cell contains a graphical object larger than its area, the object is displayed to the extent possible in empty cells to the right of and below the selected cell." Seyler does not distinguish between "standard cells" and "user interface cells"; all the cells are interchangeable. In Seyler, all the cells can participate in creating a user interface, such as the meters in Fig. 8 of Seyler. By contrast, applicant's invention provides special "user interface cells" that are accessible only via a dialog control function, and are NOT accessible like the directly accessed standard cells.

In other words, standard cells are hidden when a window or other graphical object pops up, whereas user interface cells remain hidden UNTIL a window or other graphical object pops up. Seyler has only standard cells, whereas Applicant's invention teaches and claims both standard cells and user interface cells. Therefore application as claimed is allowable over the cited prior art.

Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably

accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Sanjiv D. Shah whose telephone number is (571) 272-4098. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F 9-5:30.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Joseph H Feild can be reached on (571) 272-4090. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see http://pair-direct.uspto.gov. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

Sanjiv D. Shah
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 2176

S. Shah
April 16, 2004